



TIMOR-LESTE

LESSON PLAN

JOIN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A
COMMON GOAL





TIMOR - LESTE: A SMALL COUNTRY OF GREAT POVERTY

A country the world has forgotten

Timor-Leste is the youngest country in Asia. It is located on a small island of Timor-Leste, north of Australia. With an area of 15,000 km², it is roughly half the size of Belgium. It has a population of over one million. Timor-Leste is surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Timor, Savu and Banda seas. It might seem like a paradise, but the reality is unfortunately far from that.

Until 1975, the country was a Portuguese colony. It was here that the Portuguese discovered the sandalwood, and with it, the possibility of producing luxury furniture and perfumes as well as growing coffee. Colonisers only left the island after the military coup in Portugal in 1974. Unfortunately, Timor-Leste was independent for just nine days.

With the approval of the United States and Australia, Indonesia attacked Timor-Leste, claiming it was doing so in defence against communism. The invasion began in December 1975, and by the following year, the island was incorporated into Indonesia as its 27th province. Timor-Leste was the scene of horrifying crimes, torture, raping of women, and inhuman humiliation of the local population.

Almost a quarter of the population of Timor-Leste perished during the occupation. An example is the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre, when during the funeral of a young boy, over 270 people were killed by Indonesian soldiers. Many inhabitants of the island were forcibly sterilised, and newborns were taken away from their mothers immediately after birth. The goal was to wipe out the local population. The aggressor also brought people from the overcrowded Java to drive the Timorese out of their own island.

History: Parallels between Poland and Timor-Leste

Almost 97% of the country's population is Catholic. Under the occupation by Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population, faith became a means of survival and a drive to keep going on for the Timorese people. The Church was where the people started organising during the period of communism in Poland, and in Timor, too, it became a way to oppose the invader.

An important event for the local population was the pilgrimage of John Paul II in 1989. Although the Pope did not say such significant words as he did in Poland, 'let Your Spirit come down and renew the land, this land,' just the fact that the pope came to their country, which did not officially exist at that time, was immensely important for the Timorese people. That visit marked the beginning of the road to freedom for this country.

In 1999, a countrywide referendum was held; 78 percent of the voters were in favour of independence. This led to another wave of massacres and executions of civilians. When leaving the island, Indonesians burned, destroyed and plundered everything on their way. Timor-Leste regained its independence just in May 2002, thus becoming the youngest sovereign Asian country in the 21st century.

Customs: Freedom is not enough

Timor-Leste remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Everything is in short supply: clean water, roads, electricity, hospitals, and access to education. The country is struggling with an enormous poverty and illiteracy problem. Almost one third of its citizens still cannot read or write, and two thirds





live in extreme poverty. Children receive no education because their parents cannot afford notebooks or there is no-one to take the children to school.

The lack of education, in turn, results in a lack of awareness that one's life can be improved. There are families with seven or even ten children, who do not know where their next meal is coming from. It is difficult to combat poverty when it affects almost everyone, everywhere in the country.

Unfortunately, the country also struggles with the huge problem of the society's tacit consent to use violence against women and children. Over 80 percent of women think that their husband has the right to hit them. Violence has become the norm and nobody reacts to it. Domestic abuse stays in the family. Everyone knows about it, but nobody talks about it out loud.

Help: Change is always possible

It is a good thing that there are people like Bella Galhos, who fought for the independence of Timor-Leste in the country and in exile in Canada. Bella founded the Santana Unipessoal Foundation to teach people how to cooperate and share what they have. Thanks to her efforts, several families established a social cooperative. They work together sowing, taking care of crops, and harvesting them.

Bella is also not afraid to talk openly about the abuse of women and children. She discusses these issues with people and extends a helping hand to women who are victims of violence and mistreatment. She also talk about it with children in schools, because it is them who must understand first that violence is unacceptable. It gives them a chance to deal with this widespread issue. Note that poverty often engenders violence, which in turn aggravates poverty.





Duration:
45 minutes

SUBJECT

Join efforts to achieve a common goal

Arrange the classroom for group work. Print the materials from the appendices. Show the students fragments of the film available as an appendix to this lesson plan. Before the class, watch the full episode available at www.kulczykfoundation.org.pl.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Working together increases our capabilities and gives us a better chance of achieving our goal. We find out that by working together with other people, we start to get along; we see their value, grow respect for them, and notice their competences. We can also learn new things at the same time as well as share our skills and knowledge. It may even turn out that some of these skills or knowledge are more important and useful when applied by a group of people than by an individual. This, in turn, can boost our self-esteem. Co-operation is also an opportunity to establish and deepen relationships with other people.



Issues



Objectives



Introduction

Film
– Introduction,
screening and
reflection

OBJECTIVES

Maybe you can take just one step with your students, maybe two, or maybe even all three. It will always be a success for both you and your students!

- Step 1 – KNOW:** The students starts to understand that cooperation gives them, and the others, a better chance of achieving their goals.
- Step 2 – FEEL:** The student notices the advantages of working together, and appreciates others' contribution. They are starting to value other people.
- Step 3 – HELP:** The student expresses willingness to cooperate with others, for their own and their benefit.

INTRODUCTION

Show the students a picture of a beehive or an anthill. Ask:

- What do they associate with such structures?
- How do they think such structures work?
- What is the significance of each insect individually?

Show a photo of a group of woodchucks, zebras or antelopes and tell them that all animals cooperate with each other in their group. Ask:

- What is the significance of this cooperation?
- How do individual animals of the group benefit from it?
- What if the animals did not work together?

During the discussion, put an emphasis on safety and survival.

BEFORE THE FILM

Ask the students to watch a documentary together. Ask them to pay attention to the cooperation between the Timorese working in the Santana Unipessoal cooperative while watching the film.

FILM SCREENING



AFTER THE FILM

Talk to the students immediately after watching the film. These are some of the questions that may help you:

- How does the Santana Unipessoal cooperative function? How do the Timorese people benefit from joining and participating in the cooperative?
- What do you think about the rules of using the aid granted by Dominika Kulczyk's foundation?
- Have you ever worked together as a class? How did it work out? What do you remember about it?

Hint:

Note that the purpose of a social cooperative is to benefit everyone from working together.

TASK

Join your efforts

Ask your students to think about what they can do to improve the everyday functioning of the class; how they can pool their strengths and resources to make it easier for them to live together. Let each person think about their strengths, what they are good at, what they can do best. Then let them think of ways to use these resources to improve the everyday functioning of the class.

Help them by suggesting that these ways may include helping people who are absent from school because of illness, organising class or school events etc. Let them think about how they can act for the common good.

They can create a schedule of joint activities for the whole school year – or a semester or a month – taking into account the resources of all the students in the class and involving everyone in the work towards a common goal.



Task



Conversation

CONVERSATION

Ask your students to engage in a conversation. You can use the following questions:

- › What are your thoughts after this exercise?
- › What is important in cooperation (e.g. equal commitment, trust)?
- › What difficulties regarding the planned cooperation do you predict?

Hint:

Emphasise that cooperation does not always go smoothly. Above all, people working together need to see a common objective and be able to act together with others to achieve it. It requires communicating, negotiating and agreeing on ideas, actions and solutions. In order to work together well, it is sometimes necessary to abandon individual ideas (concepts) in favour of an idea (concept) chosen by the majority.





CONCLUSIONS

Guide your students through the following steps:

1. Making them aware of what they know about the situation of another human being (**KNOW**);
2. Drawing their attention to the role of understanding another person's problem in emotional terms and relating to that person (**FEEL**);
3. Making the decision to help in an active way (**HELP**).

KNOW:

Emphasise to the students that by joining forces, sharing tasks and using the resources of each individual, more can be achieved than if all the individuals acted on their own. By working together, we help each other, but also monitor the results of each other's work, which serves to motivate each member of the group and make the cooperation more effective.

FEEL:

Through cooperation, objectives may be achieved that are otherwise impossible. The group members feel satisfaction for accomplishing something together. Everyone feels responsible for the result, everyone can enjoy it, and everyone contributed towards it. We respect each other because we supported each other.

HELP:

Hand out paper sheets to the students. Ask the students to finish the following sentence:

Today, I found out (learnt/noticed) that cooperation...

Collect the sheets. Start the next lesson by discussing this exercise. Make sure that the responses remain anonymous.



TIMOR-LESTE

APPENDIX

Appendix to the "Introduction"



